

THE POEMS OF SIDONIUS

quo poscat dic orbe caput. quemcumque creavit
 axe meo natum, confestim fregit in illo
 imperii Fortuna rotas. hinc **Vandalus** hostis
 urget et in nostrum numerosa classe quotannis
 militat excidium, conversoque ordine fati 350
 torrida Caucaseos infert mihi Byrsa furores.
 praeterea invictus Ricimer, quem publica fata
 respiciunt, proprio solus vix Marte repellit
 piratam per rura vagum, qui proelia vitans
 victorem fugitivus agit. quis sufferat hostem 355
 qui pacem pugnamque negat? nam foedera nulla
 cum Ricimere iacit. quem cur nimis oderit audi.
 incertum crepat ille patrem, cum serva sit illi
 certa parens; nunc, ut regis sit filius, effert
 matris adulterium. tum livet quod Ricimerem 360
 in regnum duo regna vocant; nam patre Suebus,
 a genetrice Getes. simul et reminiscitur illud,
 quod Tartesiadis avus huius Vallia terris
Vandalicas turmas et iuncti Martis Halanos
 stravit et occiduum texere cadavera Calpen. 365
 quid veteres narrare fugas, quid damna priorum?

¹ Geiseric took Carthage in A.D. 439 and made it his capital. Byrsa is properly the citadel of Carthage. The epithet *Caucaseos* is very loose; the Vandals had not come from the region of the Caucasus, though the Alans, who were now subjects of the Vandal king, had done so.

² *piratam*: cf. v. 17. Geiseric was an incorrigible pirate, even when he was not actually at war. It was an attack by him on the Peloponnese that finally induced Leo to concert a gigantic offensive of East and West against him and to make Anthemius Emperor of the West. Shortly before this (461-465) Geiseric had made a series of devastating descents upon Italy and Sicily. The joint expedition, of which Sidonius speaks so hopefully, came to a disastrous end in A.D. 468, owing mainly to the incompetence of the commander-in-chief, Basiliscus.

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Agrigentini recolit dispendia campi.
inde furit, quod se docuit satis iste nepotem
illius esse viri quo viso, **Vandale**, semper
terga dabas. nam non Siculis inlustrior arvis 370
tu, Marcelle, redis, per quem tellure marique
nostra Syracusios presserunt arma penates;
nec tu cui currum Curii superare, Metelle,
contigit, ostentans nobis elephanta frequentem,
grex niger albentes tegetet cum mole iugales 375
auctoremque suum celaret pompa triumphi.
Noricus Ostrogothum quod continet, iste timetur;
Gallia quod Rheni Martem ligat, iste pavori est;
quod consanguineo me **Vandalus** hostis Halano
diripuit radente, suis hic ultus ab armis. 380
sed tamen unus homo est nec tanta pericula solus
tollere, sed differe potest: modo principe nobis
est opus armato, veterum qui more parentum
non mandet sed bella gerat, quem signa moventem
terra vel unda tremant, ut tandem iure recepto 385
Romula desuetas moderentur classica classes."

Audiit illa pater, simul annuit. itur in urbem.
continuo videt ipse deam, summissus adorat,
pectus et exsertam tetigerunt cornua mammam;

382. sed : si *Buecheler*.

¹ Ricimer with his fleet frustrated an attempted raid by Geiseric on Agrigentum and afterwards defeated him in Corsican waters, A.D. 456. See *Introd.*, p. xxi; Bury, I. 327.

² Marcellus, the capturer of Syracuse (212 B.C.).

³ Manius Curius Dentatus, conqueror of Pyrrhus (275 B.C.), had four elephants at his triumph (*Eutrop.* II. 14); L. Caecilius